

# Free Minds 2nd Saturdays

## Fall 2019



- **Meredith Learning Center, M Station** (2906 East MLK Jr. Blvd., 2nd floor) **Please note: our regular M Station space above the leasing office is unavailable this semester. Our discussions will take place at the M Station Learning Center instead.**
- 10 am—noon. We will have bagels and coffee. Bring brunch items to share if you like.
- Kiddos and guests are welcome. Child care provided by M Station Learning Center staff.

### Sept. 14

#### **Puerto Rico: Beyond the Hurricane**

September marks the second anniversary of Hurricane Maria, which devastated Puerto Rico and thrust it into the national eye. Though home to nearly three million US citizens, this US territory is often a second thought on Capitol Hill. In this session, we'll discuss the lessons of Maria and what Puerto Rico has in common with communities of color on the mainland, particularly Ferguson, MO and New Orleans, LA.

The discussion will be led by **Lauren Lluveras**, a PhD student in UT's department of African & African Diaspora Studies and a former policy professional whose work centered around Puerto Rico and Black communities in Texas.

### Oct. 12

#### **Art Forgery, Theft, and Destruction**

With Free Minds' beloved art history professor **Janis Bergman-Carton** we'll explore the fascinating world of art thefts, forgeries, and debates over the restoration of works destroyed during war-time. We'll discuss the return of 14 paintings by Vincent Van Gogh stolen 17 years ago in a brazen heist and meet the most successful art forger in history whose copies of Old Master paintings were purchased for millions of dollars. We'll also consider the impact of over a decade of war in Syria and Iraq on cultural heritage in this part of the world known as the "cradle of civilization."

**Janis Bergman-Carton** was an art history faculty member at Southern Methodist University for 25 years and has taught classes on European painting, modern art, and media culture.

### Nov. 9

#### **Jawsmania: Exploring the History of Human and Shark Entanglements**

Americans are obsessed with sharks. Shark attacks—although uncommon—saturate the news media. Pop cultural productions, such as *Jaws*, Shark Week, and "Baby Shark" are everywhere. Scientific organizations participate in this frenzy through their use of satellite telemetry, which tracks sharks and notifies people on Twitter. We will discuss the historical roots of human and shark entanglements to explore a couple of key questions: Why are Americans so obsessed with sharks, and what are the cultural and environmental implications of this obsession over time?

**Janet M. Davis**, our guide for this discussion, is Professor of American Studies and History at UT Austin and a member of The Academy of Distinguished Teachers.

### Dec. 14

#### **Freedom Summer: 1964 and Today**

In 1964, civil rights organizations, citizens of Mississippi, and student volunteers came together to challenge segregation in one of the nation's most racially oppressive states. The campaign, known as "Freedom Summer," rocked the nation and fundamentally challenged white supremacy in the South. This session will examine the history of Freedom Summer and its legacy. And in the face of ongoing racism and xenophobia, and the upcoming 2020 elections, we will consider what our "freedom summer" needs to be today.

**Nicole A. Burrowes** will lead our conversation. She is an Assistant Professor in the African and African Diaspora Studies Department at UT Austin.